BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Stats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca | Issue: 13-21 | May 27th, 2013

- **Retail sales in B.C. edged up 0.9% in March**
- **The number of E.I. beneficiaries in B.C. fell 2.4% in March**
- **The dependency ratio in British Columbia rose to 57.9 in 2012**

The Economy

- **Retail sales in British Columbia rose (+0.9%, *seasonally adjusted*) in March, recouping the 0.6% loss recorded in the previous month.** Retailers of health & personal care products and motor vehicle & parts dealers fared better than in February, but sales were down at electronics & appliance stores, food & beverage stores, gasoline stations, and clothing & accessory retailers.

  Nationally, retail sales were flat, with four provinces recording contractions. Alberta (-1.8%) and Saskatchewan (-1.7%) posted the biggest declines. PEI (-1.0%) and Manitoba (-0.6%) also saw sales dip. Newfoundland & Labrador (+1.3%) led the way in terms of growth, with sales also increasing in New Brunswick (+1.2%), British Columbia (+0.9%), Nova Scotia (+0.6%), Quebec (+0.4%), and Ontario (+0.4%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Investment in new housing in British Columbia edged up 0.2% (*2007 constant prices*) in March compared to the same period of the previous year.** This is the lowest rate recorded since April 2010, when sales declined 5.1%. Investment in single (+1.1%) and double (+12.3%) family dwellings, as well as apartments (+4.6%) rose, while investment in row housing (-22.2%) fell for the fifteenth straight month.

  Nationally, investment expanded 2.0%, following a 4.3% rise in February. Investment in single family (-1.7%) and row (-10.6%) dwellings fell for the third month in a row. Meanwhile, investment in double family dwellings (+6.3%) and apartments (+11.7%) continued to grow. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

First Quarter in Review

- **Retail sales in British Columbia inched ahead 0.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) during the first quarter of 2013.** This marks the second quarterly improvement in revenues, following a 0.2% rise in the fourth quarter of 2012. Leading the way were gains at gasoline stations (+2.2%), furniture & home furnishing stores (+1.8%), and motor vehicle & parts dealers (+1.7%). Most of the increases were offset by weaker sales at clothing & accessory (-4.9%), electronics & appliance (-4.1%), health & personal care (-1.7%), and food and beverage (-0.5%) stores.

  At the national level, retail sales rose 0.1% during the first quarter of 2013. The national total was propped up by jumps in retail activity in Alberta (+1.4%), Quebec (+0.4%), New Brunswick (+0.4%), and British Columbia (+0.1%). Six provinces reported declines in sales, with Saskatchewan (-2.6%), Nova Scotia (-1.7%), and PEI (-1.4%) recording the largest drops. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

Population & Health

- **The dependency ratio (*the ratio of the combined population aged 0 to 19 or 65 and older to the working age (20 to 64) population*) edged up to 57.9 in British Columbia in 2012, from 57.3 in 2011.** Of the health service delivery areas, Okanagan (70.9 dependents per 100) and Central Vancouver Island (70.6) had the highest dependency ratios, while

Did you know...

Each year, it is estimated that Canadians throw away $27 billion worth of food.

Source: Value Change Management

Vancouver (41.7) and Fraser North (51.0) had the lowest.

The rise in the dependency ratio was a result of an increase in the proportion of the senior (*aged 65 years and over*) population in the province, which accounted for 15.9% of the total population in 2012, up 0.6% percentage points from the previous year. This was the largest increase recorded since 1996—the first year for which data is available—when seniors made up 12.6% of the provincial population. Northeast (9.1%) had the lowest senior population (relative to total population), followed by Vancouver (12.8%) and Northwest (12.8%), with Okanagan (21.7%) and Central Vancouver Island (22.1%) registering the highest concentration of senior residents.

The percentage of youth (under 20 years of age) as a proportion of total population fell to 20.8%, down from 21.1% in 2011, and 25.9% in 1996. Northwest (25.5%) and Northeast (27.0%) had relatively high youth populations, though it's share has steadily declined in both regions since the survey commenced in 1996, from 33.5% and 33.8%, respectively

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **A recent study on the lifetime income-distribution effects of publicly financed healthcare by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) found that income inequality was reduced by 16% when the value of health care costs are taken into account.** For the highest income group, health care costs represented 3% ($3,350 of $114,900) of average income, while they represented 24% ($4,220 of $17,500) of average income for the lowest income group. The lowest income group had average lifetime health care costs ($237,500) 15% higher than the highest income group ($206,000). Individuals in the lowest income group paid approximately $740 (6% of income, *cross-section, 2011*) annually in taxes toward health care, while those in the highest income group paid $7,210 (8% of income) per person on an annual basis.

Approximately 70% of Canadian health care services are financed by public tax dollars, with all taxpayers contributing to the program whether or not they use the health care system. Of total health care expenditures, over 90% of hospital and physician costs are publicly financed, while approximately 38% of total drug spending is funded by governments. *Data Source: CIHI*

Labour

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits fell 2.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) to 53,410 in March.** The number of recipients aged 55 years and older dropped 2.9%, to 11,830. The number of Employment Insurance recipients aged 25 to 54 years (-2.3%) and 15 to 24 years (-1.7%) also contracted. The number of male recipients dropped at a slightly faster rate (-2.5%, to 30,930) than female recipients (-2.2% to 22,480). Nationally, the number of EI beneficiaries was down slightly (-1.0%). The total number of recipients declined in every province, with Saskatchewan (-3.1%) recording the sharpest contraction. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **For every job vacancy in British Columbia in February, there were 5.8 unemployed people (*3-month moving average, unadjusted*), compared to 7.6 in February 2012.** There were 158,500 unemployed people in February, 8.7% less than in the same month of 2012. At the same time, the number of vacant jobs has increased 20.1%, with vacancies totalling 27,500. Job vacancies have been steadily on the rise since April 2012.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Infoline Issue: 13-21
May 27th, 2013

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline

May 27, 2013
Issue 13-21

Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at **www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca** or choose RSS

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/2013	% change on one year ago
BC	4,639.9	0.8
Canada	35,056.1	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 19)		
(BC - at market prices)	2011	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	217,749	4.5
GDP *($ 2007 millions)*	206,180	2.8
GDP *($ 2007 per Capita)*	45,083	1.8
Household Sector Disposable Income *($ 2007 per Capita)*	26,788	0.9
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Mar 2013	3,360	1.2
Merchandise Exports - Mar 2013	3,001	12.9
Retail Sales - Feb 2013	5,115	-0.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Apr 2013)	one year ago	% change
BC	-0.8	0.6
Vancouver	-0.8	0.8
Victoria	-1.3	0.4
Canada	0.4	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Apr 2013	prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	9.5	
Labour Force - BC	2,471.0	-0.2
Employed - BC	2,312.1	0.4
Unemployed - BC	158.8	-8.3
		Mar 2013
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	6.4	7.0
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.2	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	May 22/2013	May 23/2012
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.00	3.20
- 5 year	5.14	5.44
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	May 22/2013	May 23/2012
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0333	1.0210
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9641	0.9764
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Apr 2013	one year ago
BC	877.05	3.9
Canada	885.20	3.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

2011 Census Profiles

We have added files for Health geographies, School Districts, College Regions and Ministry of Children and Family Development Regions. The file layout matches the other 2011 Profiles, simplifying comparisons to many areas . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/OpenData.aspx

Provincial Electoral District Profiles 2011

Posted to our Open Data page is a 2011 Census Profile for the Provincial Electoral Districts. The file layout matches the other 2011 Profiles, simplifying comparisons to many areas . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/OpenData.aspx

Population Estimates by Age and Sex 2012

Updated population estimates by age and sex for B.C. sub-provincial regions are now available. . . See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx

B.C. Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector

The 2012 edition of the profile of British Columbia's fisheries and aquaculture sector is now available. See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/AboutUs/News/13-01-29/British_Columbia_s_Fisheries_and_Aquaculture_Sector.aspx

Municipal Population Estimates 2012

Population estimates for B.C. municipalities and regional districts as of July 1, 2012 are now available. See more: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationEstimates.aspx

Released last week by BC Stats

- No periodical releases

To Release this week

- Business Indicators
- Tourism Sector Monitor

BC Stats, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
Tel: 250-387-0327 Fax: 250-387-0380 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca